LADISLAV SUTNAR  
(1897-1976)  
SUTNAR COLLECTION FINDING GUIDE

Wallace Library Special Collections  
Rochester Institute of Technology

2 document boxes  
3 oversize boxes  
9 unboxed oversize pieces

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Addenda:  
processed by Carole Ann Fabian  
May 1998

Addenda:  
processed by Christopher Kibler  
August 1999
ABOUT LADISLAV SUTNAR

An important designer and design theorist, Ladislav Sutnar was educated in Prague. He taught at the State School of Graphic Arts, Prague, from 1923-36. He was well-known for his work in the publishing community as well as for his work as a stage and exhibit designer. He travelled to New York as exhibition designer for the 1939 World's Fair Czech Pavilion. He remained in the United States and became one of the leading graphic design forces of the 1940s-1950s.

Notable among his contributions were his corporate identity work for Addox Business Machines and his conceptualization and implementation of "information design" for the Sweets Industrial Catalogs.

Sutnar published many articles and books but is perhaps best known for his books: Visual Design in Action and Package Design.

More biographical information on Ladislav Sutnar can be found in:

RIT Reference Collection NK 1165.C668 1984

Livingston, Alan. Thames & Hudson Encyclopedia of Graphic Design and Designers
RIT Reference Collection NC 998.4 L58 1992

SCOPE NOTE:

The Ladislav Sutnar collection at the RIT Archives and Special Collections is comprised of correspondence, biographical files, bibliographic files and client files. Within these files are many examples of Sutnar's original art, artist's proofs, tear-sheets and finished projects.

Twelve (12) additional items were added to the collection in April 1998 by a gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen. Each of these items have been interfiled with the original gift and are identified within this finding guide and as a separate list in the Addendum.

Thirty-three additional items were added to the collection in August 1999 by a gift of the Smithsonian Institution Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum. Each of these items has been interfiled with the original gift and are identified within this finding guide and as a separate list in the Addendum. Gifts from the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum are identified by the notation [Gift: C-HNDM].
BOX 1

HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION

Correspondence and inventories

Notes and original folders, mounts, wrapping

BIOGRAPHICAL FILES

Biographical Documentation


Exhibitions

- Addo-x, Mexico City, 1958 (Box 1, 6 pieces and Box 3, 2 pieces)
- Sutnar: Visual Design in Action," Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, 1961 (Box 4, 15 pieces; Box 5, 5 pieces; and 8 unboxed pieces; Box 1, 2 pieces [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]; unboxed, 1 poster [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998])
- Ladislav Sutnar: "Joy-Art," Shuster Gallery, New York, 1969 (Box 1, 1 piece) [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]

BIBLIOGRAPHIC FILES

Writings about Sutnar
[Citations are arranged in chronological order]

Books and Periodical Articles

Writings by Sutnar
[Citations are arranged in chronological order]

Periodical Articles

-"How important is the surface to design?" *Print* 13 (January-February 1959): 29.

Books

-Design for point of sale. New York: Pellegrini and Cudahy, 1952. Unpaged, illustrated (black and white), 23.5 X 30.5 cm.
-Package design: the force of visual selling. New York: Arts, Inc., 1953. Unpaged, illustrated (black and white), 23.5 X 30.5, 2 copies, one with dust jacket (23.5 X 89 cm.)
-"An interval of design freedom" [signature from Visual design in action: principles, purposes]. Unpaged, illustrated (color), 31.5 X 21.5 cm. [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]
BOX 2

CLIENT FILES

Acorn Wire & Iron Works
- Box 2, 1 piece [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]

Addo-x Business Machines
(see also Exhibitions)
- 15 pieces
- Oversize Box 3, 11 pieces
- Box 2, 1 piece [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]

Adler Typewriters
- 1 piece
- Oversize Box 3, 1 piece

American Institute of Graphic Arts
- Oversize Box 3, 2 pieces

American Standard
- 3 pieces

Anderson Corporation
- 1 piece

Arts, Inc.
- 14 miscellaneous pieces
- Oversize Box 3, 3 pieces

Bell System
- 1 piece

Carrs Self Service Department Store
- Oversize Box 3, 2 pieces
- Box 2, 1 piece [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]
- Box 2, 1 piece [gift of C - HNDM, August 1999]

Canterbury Printing Company
- 2 pieces

Celotex Corporation
-

Columbia University - School of Architecture
- *Break-through to the Hudson River: A plan for Yonkers to Peekskill*. New York: Columbia University, School of Architecture, 1964. [47 pages], illustrated (black and white and color), 12.5 X 9.5 cm.
- Box 2, 1 piece [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]

Czechoslovakian Government
- 3 pieces

Fortune Magazine
- 5 pieces

Golden Griffin Books see Arts, Inc.
- 1 piece

Honeywell
- Oversize Box 3, 1 piece

Knoll + Drake
- 3 pieces
- Oversize Box 3, 1 piece
New York Art Directors Club
- 1 piece see Power Magazine
- Oversize Box 3, 6 pieces
- 1 piece, Box 2 [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]

Power Magazine
- 7 pieces

Printex
- 1 piece
- Oversize Box 3, 3 pieces

Roneo Duplicators and Supplies
- 1 piece
- Oversize Box 3, 1 piece

Standard Oil of New Jersey (1943-1950)
- 1 piece

Statni graficka skola v praze
- 1 piece

Sutnar, Ladislav
- Oversize Box 3, 1 piece

Sweet's Catalog Service (1941-1960)
- 17 pieces
- Oversize Box 3, 1 piece

Theatre Arts
- 4 pieces
- Oversize Box 3, 3 pieces

Vera
- 16 pieces
- Oversize Box 3, 6 pieces

VS. vytvarne snahy (periodical)
- 3 pieces
- Oversize Box 3, 3 pieces

zijeme(periodical)
- 1 piece

unknown
- 16 pieces
- Box 2, 2 pieces [original art, lithographs?] 28 X 22 cm. each, [gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998]
- Oversize Box 3a, 28 pieces
BOX 3 (Oversized - Client Files)

Addo-x Business Machines
(see also Exhibitions)
- 11 pieces

Adler Typewriters
- 1 piece

American Institute of Graphic Arts
- 2 pieces

Arts, Inc.
- 3 pieces

Carrs Self Service Department Store
- 2 pieces

Honeywell
- 1 piece

Knoll + Drake
- 1 piece

New York Art Directors Club
- 6 pieces

Printex
- 3 pieces

Roneo Duplicators and Supplies
- 1 piece

Sutnar
- 1 piece

Sweet's Catalog Service (1941-1960)
- 1 piece

Theatre Arts
- 3 pieces

Vera
- 6 pieces

VS. vytvarne snahy (periodical)
- 3 pieces

unknown
- 28 pieces
BOX 4 (Oversized - Biographical)

"Sutnar: Visual Design in Action," Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, 1961 (Box 4, 15 pieces, Box 5, 5 pieces and 8 unboxed pieces)

BOX 5 (Oversized - Biographical)


UNBOXED MATERIALS (Oversized - Biographical)


ADDENDUM (Gift of Elaine Lustig Cohen, April 1998)

The following materials have been interfiled with the Sutnar Collection. Each item and its corresponding Finding Guide entry is marked as part of this gift.

- 1 invitation to preview reception of exhibition
- 1 catalog of exhibition
- 1 poster for exhibition

- 1 piece: exhibition announcement

Writings: An interval of Design Freedom (1960)
- 1 piece: signature from Visual Design in Action

Clients:
- Acorn Wire & Iron Works, Inc. (n.d.): proof of ad
- Addo-X: corporate image brochure
- Columbia University - School of Architecture: Break-through to the Hudson River [1 book]
- Carrs: corporate image brochure
- Unknown: 2 original artworks [lithographs?]